

precise location of an amendment, we have corrected the matter in the substitute specification without making any additional amendment. In the case of other errors that have been noted, an amendment has been made as set forth above. In the case of the changes made at page 5, lines 10 and 22 of the substitute specification, these changes are made to establish antecedents for the relationships that are confirmed as stated at page 5, line 25 and page 6, line 9 of the specification and therefore do not constitute new matter.

Also enclosed is a copy of the seven sheets of the Microfiche Appendix originally filed with the application on January 17, 1997.

A petition to extend the time to respond by a period of three months from January 30, 1999 to April 30, 1999 is also enclosed.

In the first Office Action of October 30, 1998, a substitute specification and a copy of the Microfiche Appendix were required. As noted above, both are enclosed.

Further, the specification was objected to as not being written in "full, clear, and concise and exact terms." In particular, the Examiner objected to the use of the terms "confirmed defined relationship" and "denied defined relationship." The Examiner indicated that she assumed that these terms referred to whether e-mail was in an active or an inactive stage. While the Office Action contains a section entitled "Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112-", no specific rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112 is set forth.

Claims 1-5, 7-16, 18-25, 27-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S.P. 5,809,242 to Shaw et al. in view of U.S.P. 5,822,523 to Rothschild.

It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner has misunderstood the invention. The present invention seeks to establish a database of records about individuals who are linked to one another by a defined relationship. The types of defined relationships are stated in the specification as filed to be the types that would be used in networking. See page 4, lines 1-15. Specific instances of the relationship type are stated at page 30, line 17 to be "father, mother, worker." Since the relationships are reciprocal (see page 5, line 26), other instances of relationship type are clearly "son, daughter." Other familial relationships such as brother or sister are obvious extensions as are the customary relationships of networking: former co-worker, classmate, fellow alumnus. Contrary to the Examiner's assumption, however, the defined relationship clearly is not whether one's e-mail is active or inactive.



Because specific instances of relationships are set forth in the specification and because the term "defined relationship" is used throughout the specification, it is submitted that the term "defined relationship" is clear and concise and in compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 112. Moreover, since the terms "confirmed defined relationship" and "denied defined relationship" simply refer to whether a defined relationship has been confirmed or denied by an individual, it is likewise submitted that these terms are also clear and concise and in compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 112.

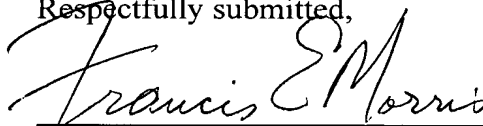
With respect to the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103, this rejection is based on the erroneous assumption that the terms "confirmed defined relationship" and "denied defined relationship" refer to whether e-mail is active or inactive. Since these terms do not relate to e-mail activity, the Examiner's rejection of the claims on the basis of the Shaw reference is misplaced.

Additional claims have been added to provide an alternative description of applicants' inventive method for creating a networking database system. These claims are supported by the specification, for example, the description in the Summary of the Invention. These claims are believed patentable for the same reason claim 1 is patentable.

In view of the foregoing it is believed that this application is in condition for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested.

Date April 30, 1999

Respectfully submitted,



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Enclosure